

REMARKS

Claims 1-24, 26-28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 37 and 38 are pending. By this response, claims 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are amended and claims 25, 29, 32, 35 and 36 are cancelled. Allowance of the application based on the above amendments are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the indication of claims 6-9, 15-16, 19-20, 22, 25, 29, 32 and 35-37 as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant notes that independent claims 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 have been amended to include the allowed features of respective dependent claims 25, 29, 32, 35 and 36.

Prior Art Rejections

The Office Action rejects claims 1-2 and 4 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Nakazawa et al. (US 6,331,903); claims 3, 5, 21 and 23-24, 28, 33 and 37 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakazawa and Kinoshita et al. (US 5,448,377); claims 10-12 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakazawa, Kinoshita and Walker et al. (US 6,381,582); claims 13-14 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakazawa and Slotznick et al. (US5,983,200); claims 17-18 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakazawa, Kinoshita, Parulski (US 5,440,343) and Watanabe (US 6,529,236); claims 27-31, 34 under 35 USC 103(a) in view of Nakazawa and Kondo et al. (US 2001/0030687); claim 38 under 35 USC 103(a) in view of Nakazawa, Kinoshita and Kondo and claims 26 and 30 under 35 USC 103(a) in view of Nakazawa. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As noted above, independent claims 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 have been amended to include the allowed features of respective dependent claims 25, 29, 32, 35 and 36. Therefore, independent

claims 1-5 and their respective dependent claims are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the rejections noted above are moot. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

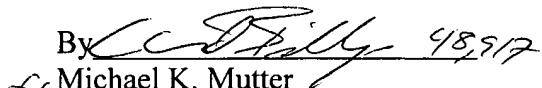
It is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Michael K. Mutter, Reg. No. 29,680 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: February 9, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By 
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